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ABSTRACT

This report of the Youth Employment Committee begins with the history of its formation. A discussion of the committee meetings is divided into two sections focusing on its two subcommittees. The section on the skills subcommittee lists the basic academic competencies and work-related skills as well as the nonacademic, work-related skills developed by the subcommittee. The section on the activities of the program evaluation subcommittee presents the 14 criteria for an effective education for employment program for 12 to 16 year olds--eight crucial to the success of programs of this kind and six preferred. Results are then presented of a survey of selected junior and senior high schools to learn more about the nature and frequency of business participation in education for employment programs. Thirteen recommendations for education for employment programs are made that were approved by the commission. One recommendation lists and describes model education for employment programs that schools should incorporate into new or existing programs. An appendix lists the names of persons or organizations to contact for more detailed information about the programs cited. (YLB)

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Report of the Youth Employment Committee

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November 1983

Mrs. Helen Weigle, Chairperson

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LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

TO: Governor Thompson and Members of the General Assembly

This report, which I am pleased to offer, represents the best efforts of a committee truly concerned about our young people and their preparation for the work world.

It is the committee's belief that dramatic changes in the workplace have made the role of education in preparing students for the world of work more important than ever. Furthermore, the committee is convinced that this preparation should begin in earnest at the junior high school level. For these reasons the committee strongly supports improvements in the quality of education and measures which expand and strengthen education for employment.

Along with my appreciation to the committee members for their contributions to this report, goes my hope that the enthusiasm shown by the committee will be shared by those reading the report.

Sincerely,

Mr. Bowen Tucker, Chairperson
Youth Employment Committee

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chairperson

Mr. Bowen Tucker
Illinois Commission on Children
FMC Corporation
Chicago

Members

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Cook County Office of Manpower Services
Chicago

Mrs. Miriam Apter
National Council of Jewish Women
Chicago

Mr. Samuel C. Bernstein
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Ms. Margaret Moore
Mary Bartelme Homes
Chicago

Ms. Natalie Morton
Jewish Vocational Services
& Employment Center
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Mr. John Porter
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Project SKIL
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Ms. Dorothy Scheff
League of Women Voters of Illinois
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Dr. Allen J. Smith
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Chicago Public Schools
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Ms. Phyllis Wallace
YMCA of the USA
Chicago

Ms. Betty Willhoite
League of Women Voters of Chicago
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DESCRIPTION OF COMMISSION ON CHILDREN

The Commission on Children is a statutory commission created by the Legislature to provide the mandate, manpower and machinery for the orderly study, planning, promoting, coordinating, and stimulating of services in behalf of Illinois children.

Membership

Of the thirty-three members of the Commission, 16 are public members appointed for four year staggered terms. Six more are members of the General Assembly; 3 from the Senate, 2 appointed by the President and 1 by the Minority Leader; and 3 from the House of Representatives, 2 appointed by the Speaker and 1 by the Minority Leader. Another nine members are the state department or division directors having responsibility for the provision of services to children and families. Finally, three members—the Chairperson and 2 other youths—from the Illinois Council of Youth, which is a representative body of young people between the age of 15 and 21, also serve on the Commission.

Function

The law creating the Commission states that the Commission shall:

"(a) Study the needs of all children and assist in planning for the improvement and most effective use of voluntary and tax supported programs at the state and local levels;

(b) Study programs for children in Illinois and in other states, make reports and advise public and private bodies throughout the state on matters relevant to the protection, growth, and development of children;

(c) Assist in the coordination of the administrative responsibility and the services of the State departments and programs as they relate to the well-being of children;

(d) Make recommendations on needed legislative action on behalf of children;

(e) Promote adequate educational services and training programs for children, including exceptional children, in all parts of the state;

(f) Promote social services and vocational guidance, training, and placement for all children who require them, including exceptional children and those youth who leave school prior to high school graduation, and promote adequate special facilities for children maladjusted to their home surroundings;

(g) Promote adequate provisions throughout the state for diagnosis and treatment of children who may require special medical services."

Procedure

The major part of the work of the Commission on Children is carried on through the use of Special Project Committees. These committees study, assess, develop and make recommendations to the Commission on specific problem areas concerning children which are considered to require the priority attention of the Commission and the citizens of the State. The action taken on these recommendations is then transmitted by the Commission on Children to the appropriate group, organization or person for implementation. This may be to the Legislature for necessary legislation, to the Governor for Executive consideration, to public or private agencies, or to members of professional organizations.

INTRODUCTION

1980 White House Conference on Children

The origin of the Youth Employment Committee can be traced to the 1980 Illinois White House Conference on Children. In the section of the conference report on education and employment the conferees recommended, among other things, that "The Illinois Commission on Children should initiate a task force on youth employment to assess the needs and to recommend means of providing solutions: particular attention should be given to the needs of low-income and minority and handicapped youth. The Illinois Council of Youth and private business should be invited to join in the effort."

This recommendation and others were made in response to the very troubling picture of youth unemployment. The report cited 1978 unemployment rates for black and white youths between the ages of 16 and 19 as 38.6% and 13.9% respectively. Tragically, the situation worsened as the recession of 1981-82 wore on and the unemployment rates for this age group of blacks and whites rose to 51.2% and 21.6% respectively. In June of this year, six months after the end of the recession, the unemployment rates had dropped only slightly to 50.6% for blacks and 20% for whites.[1] For Hispanic youth, the recession-high unemployment rate was 33.1% during the third quarter of 1982. The third quarter of 1983 showed a decline in the rate to 27.3%. The figures for Hispanic youth are not seasonally adjusted.[2]

The belief that education to some extent can ameliorate this problem was reaffirmed in the White House Conference report. "The impact of employment on the school experience must also be weighed. Ideally the work and school experiences should complement one another. The transition from school to work is very abrupt and also uncertain. Presently it takes more time to accumulate job skills to try out the labor market to see what it wants and the young person realistically has to offer. Hopefully the schools can ease the transition from school to the labor market."

Illinois Conference on Children's Priorities for the '80's

As a follow-up to the White House Conference, the Commission on Children sponsored the Illinois Conference on Children's Priorities for the '80's. The purpose of the conference was to select among the 54 issues identified by the White House Conference, the sixteen most important. After four regional conferences and a final statewide conference, sixteen were selected and placed in order of their priority. Youth employment was ranked the seventh most vital issue.

Commission on Children

After Mr. Bowen Tucker was named Chairperson of the yet-to-be formed Youth Employment Committee in July, a meeting to explore all sides of the issue was held in Chicago in September. Approximately 50 persons conversant in youth employment programs and policy were invited. Mr. Sam Bernstein, Chairman of Donald Kane Associates, was the keynote speaker.

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[1] Monthly Labor Review, United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Washington, D.C., August, 1983, Page 53, table 5.

[2] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Employment & Earnings, October, 1983, Table A-62.

In November, 1982 the Commission approved the recommended charge which stated:

> **The Youth Employment Committee shall "target the 12 to 16 age group for study and recommendations in the area of youth employment, seeking out the existence of services for 1) networking public and private agencies, and 2) developing an Association of Employers and Teachers to identify and provide readiness skills for this age group."**

The 12 to 16 year-old age group was chosen since the Commission felt that more could be done in the area of employment and career orientation and preparation. By expanding education for employment programs for this age group, the Commission believed that students would gain a better understanding of the importance of education in the development of skills which will be required for future employment. Although the economy has made it difficult to find work for 16 to 21 year-olds, the number of education and employment remediation programs indicates that a portion of the unemployed have not been adequately prepared for the world of work. That a reduction in the need for such programs could be accomplished through a greater emphasis on education for employment for the younger age group was also part of the Commission's thinking in wanting to focus on 12 to 16 year-olds.

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE

Committee Meetings

The first of the committee's nine monthly meetings was held on January 5, 1983. Among those invited to join the committee were representatives of state departments, business and industry, public schools and youth serving agencies. Much of the first meeting was devoted to discussing the committee's charge and how to proceed. At the second meeting it was decided to divide into two subcommittees: Skills and Program Evaluation. The Skills subcommittee was given the task of developing a list of academic competencies and work-related skills which, in the opinion of the committee, students need to learn more than ever before. For the Program Evaluation subcommittee, the purpose was to determine the essential elements of any education for employment program for 12 to 16 year-olds and then use the elements to identify successful programs.

Subcommittees

Skills Subcommittee

Two major themes ran through the discussions of this subcommittee: Students must be given a firm foundation in "basic skills", that is, reading, writing, and mathematics, and students must learn the skills necessary to find and progress in a job or career. A third theme, less emphasized than the other two, was the need for students to learn flexibility and adaptability due to continual changes in the workplace brought on by technological advancements and a shifting economy.

Much attention in recent months has been given to the need to reinvigorate our public schools. Reports such as "A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform"[3] issued by the

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[3] The National Commission on Excellence in Education, A Nation At Risk: The Imperative For Educational Reform, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C. April, 1983.

National Commission on Excellence in Education, and "Action For Excellence"[4] released by the Education Commission of the States, Task Force on Education for Economic Growth have asserted that academic skills for many students are being eroded by a less than rigorous range of courses and an easing of graduation requirements. The subcommittee, aware of the problems identified by these and other studies, felt that one of the major impediments to obtaining employment for many young persons was the lack of a firm grasp of academic fundamentals.

While much of the committee's concern was devoted to students acquiring the necessary academic and social skills, there was general agreement among the members that students must be prepared for the inevitable alterations in the workplace brought on by changes in the economy. That the changes in the economy are having an influence upon the workplace was most recently noted by the executive council of the American Federation of Labor—Congress of Industrial Organizations. Prior to the beginning of the AFL-CIO's 1983 annual convention, the executive council said that "technology continues to change the structure of the U.S. economy, the mix of industries, the location of industries and jobs, and the nature of occupations, education, and skill requirements."[5] As an illustration of the technological strides being made, there is a belief by some that the current heavy demand for computer programmers will taper off significantly by the end of the decade as more sophisticated computers assume this function. What this means is that predicting labor market needs over the long-term will be difficult at best, severely testing the ability of schools to make the necessary adjustments in the skills they are teaching. And for students, this means not only must they learn to accept change as a natural occurrence in the workplace, but they must also learn how to successfully cope with it.

ACADEMIC COMPETENCIES AND WORK-RELATED SKILLS

In the Skills subcommittee's attempt to determine what academic skills students must acquire, the list of basic academic competencies developed by the College Board's Educational EQuality Project in 1981 was found to be a good starting point from which to work.[6] The subcommittee was apparently not alone in its unwillingness to "reinvent the wheel" in view of the Educational EQuality Project's work. Both the Center for Public Resources, Human Resources Executive Program report "Basic Skills in the U.S. Work Force"[7], and the Education Commission of the States, Task Force on Education for Economic Growth report "Action for Excellence" relied heavily on the project's list of academic competencies in developing their own.

When the subcommittee began altering the list of basic academic competencies it took into consideration changes suggested by Chicago United, a consortium of prominent white, black and Hispanic business and professional persons, in consultation with Chicago public school administrators. Given that the list was meant as a statement of what academic preparation ought to be for students bound for college, Chicago United had in mind the same purpose as the subcommittee for proposing modifications: to make the academic competencies applicable to all students.

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[4] Education Commission of the States, Task Force on Education for Economic Growth, Action For Excellence, Washington, D.C., June, 1983.

[5] The New York Times, "Firm U.S. Policy to Guide Growth of Industry Urged by Labor Chiefs", October 3, 1983, page 1.

[6] Educational EQuality Project, The College Board, The Basic Academic Competencies, 888 Seventh Avenue, New York, New York, 1982.

[7] Center for Public Resources, Basic Skills in the U.S. Work Force, 680 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York, February, 1983.

Turning to work-related skills, the subcommittee again took into account recommended changes to the Project EQuality Competency statement made by Chicago United. In the estimate of Chicago United, these skills are of such importance that they should not be overlooked. Another aid to the subcommittee in this area was a teaching guide, "Methods and Materials for Teaching: Occupational Survival Skills"[8], obtained from the Division of Adult, Vocational and Technical Education, State Board of Education. The introductory paragraphs to the following list of basic academic competencies and work-related skills developed by the subcommittee were taken from the texts of the Educational EQuality Project publication and the ISBE teaching guide and then altered by the subcommittee.

Academic Competencies

Academic competencies are developed abilities: they are the outcomes of learning and intellectual discourse. They are acquired when there are incentives and stimulation to learning and when there is an encouraging learning environment. Academic competencies provide a way to tell students what is expected of them. The knowledge of what is expected is crucial to effective learning: its absence dooms much of learning.

Specific skills that are needed are:

Reading Competencies

1. The ability to identify and comprehend the main and subordinate ideas in a written work and to summarize the ideas in one's own words.

2. The ability to recognize different purposes and methods of writing, to identify a writer's point of view and tone, and to interpret a writer's meaning inferentially as well as literally.

3. The ability to separate one's personal opinions and assumptions from a writer's.

4. The ability to vary one's reading speed and method (survey, skim, review, question, and master) according to the type of material and one's purpose for reading.

5. The ability to use the features of books and other reference materials, such as table of contents, preface, introduction, titles and subtitles, index, glossary, appendix, bibliography.

6. The ability to define unfamiliar or new words by decoding, using contextual clues, or by using a dictionary.

Writing Competencies

1. The ability to conceive ideas about a topic for the purpose of writing.

2. The ability to organize, select, and relate ideas and to outline and develop them in coherent paragraphs.

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[8] Illinois State Board of Education Adult, Vocational and Technical Education, Methods and Materials for Teaching: Occupational Survival Skills, Springfield, Illinois.

3. The ability to write Standard English sentences with correct:

   —sentence structure
   —verb forms
   —punctuation, capitalization, possessives, plural forms, and other matters of mechanics
   —word choice and spelling
   —handwriting legibility

4. The ability to vary one's writing style, including vocabulary and sentence structure, for different readers and purposes.

5. The ability to improve one's own writing by restructuring, correcting errors, and rewriting.

6. The ability to gather information from primary and secondary sources; to write a report using this research; to quote, paraphrase, and summarize accurately; and to cite sources properly.

7. The ability to complete applications and forms satisfactorily.

Speaking and Listening Competencies

1. The ability to engage critically and constructively in the exchange of ideas, particularly during discussions and conferences with others.

2. The ability to answer and ask questions coherently and concisely, and to follow spoken instructions.

3. The ability to listen, identify and comprehend the main and subordinate ideas in instructions and discussions and to report and explain accurately what others have said.

4. The ability to conceive and develop ideas about a topic for the purpose of speaking to various size groups; to choose and organize related ideas; to present them clearly in Standard English; and to evaluate similar presentations by others.

5. The ability to vary one's use of spoken language to suit different situations and audiences.

Mathematical Competencies

1. The ability to perform, with reasonable accuracy, the computations of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division using natural numbers, fractions, decimals, and integers.

2. The ability to make and use measurements.

3. The ability to use effectively the mathematics of:

   —integers, fractions, and decimals
   —ratios, proportions, and percentages
   —algebra
   —geometry

4. The ability to make estimates and approximations, and to judge the reasonableness of a result.

5. The ability to understand, formulate and solve a problem in mathematical terms.

6. The ability to select and use appropriate approaches and tools in solving problems (mental computation, trial and error, paper-and-pencil techniques, calculator, and computer)

7. The ability to use and understand elementary concepts of probability and statistics.

Reasoning Competencies

1. The ability to identify and formulate problems, as well as the ability to propose and evaluate ways to solve them.

2. The ability to recognize and use inductive and deductive reasoning, and to recognize fallacies in reasoning.

3. The ability to draw reasonable conclusions from information found in various sources, whether written, spoken, tabular, or graphic, and to defend one's conclusions rationally.

4. The ability to comprehend, develop, and use concepts and generalizations.

5. The ability to distinguish between fact and opinion.

Learning Competencies

1. The ability to set goals and priorities consistent with stated objectives, interests and one's own progress, to establish surroundings and habits conducive to learning independently or with others, and to follow a schedule that accounts for both short- and long-term projects.

2. The ability to locate and use a variety of resources (for example, libraries, computers, interviews, and direct observation), and to incorporate knowledge from such sources into the learning process.

3. The ability to develop and use general and specialized vocabularies.

4. The ability to understand and to follow customary instructions for work in order to recall, comprehend, analyze, summarize, and report the main ideas from reading, instructions, and other experiences; and to synthesize knowledge and apply it to new situations.

5. The ability to accept various types of evaluations.

6. The ability to accept constructive criticism and learn from it.

NONACADEMIC, WORK-RELATED SKILLS

Human relation skills are basic to all human interactions, both on and off the job. While technical skills are essential on the job, interpersonal problems are frequent reasons for conflict and job dissatisfaction. Workers need to have knowledge of human behavior and how relations between people affect productivity and personal well-being.

In order to succeed in an occupation, knowledge of an organization is important. Workers should understand why people work and the factors which motivate people to do their best work. Leadership skills in creativity, problem solving, and decision-making are also important to occupational success. Workers often experience unexpected problems or difficult situations. In order for workers to cope successfully they should be prepared to be flexible, as well as to be able to identify, confront, and help solve problems resulting from changes within their organizations.

Specific skills that are needed are:

1. The ability to develop positive work habits, such as dependability and punctuality.
2. The ability to develop and maintain a positive attitude.
3. The ability to accept a standard of work.
4. The ability to perform as a team member.
5. The ability to understand one's responsibilities.
6. The ability to develop and maintain positive interpersonal relationships.
7. The ability to develop good grooming and hygiene habits, as well as to maintain good health.
8. The ability to assess personal strengths and weaknesses in order to promote self-confidence.
9. The ability to conduct a systematic job search.

Program Evaluation Subcommittee

The Program Evaluation subcommittee undertook to identify successful education for employment programs, and then determine the most essential and important criteria for measuring the success of these types of programs. In keeping with the committee's charge, the subcommittee was only concerned with the needs of students between the ages of 12 and 16.

The subcommittee used as a guide the State Board of Education's definition of education for employment, which states that it "is comprised of various school experiences which are designed to provide people of all ages with an awareness and exploration of, orientation to or preparation for, the work world."

A member of the staff of the State Board of Education, who is also a committee member, described the process used by the Board for evaluating education for employment programs. In the past, programs were evaluated every three years. Now, programs with budgets over $20,000 are evaluated each year. Due to funding and enrollment patterns anywhere from 57 to 100 programs are subject to yearly evaluations.

The first stage of the process is a self-evaluation. Following the approval of the self-evaluation by the State Board, a team of professionals and school board members from other districts visit the school to observe the programs and assess the facilities. A report is made of the on-site visit listing recommendations for improving the quality of the school's program. Though the recognition and supervision teams note programs which they judge to be exemplary, the State Board does not compile these outstanding programs into a report.

A review of the literature was conducted by a staff member of the Commission in order to find evaluations of education for employment programs in other states. It was discovered that the Wisconsin Vocational Studies Center had surveyed youth vocational education program coordinators in a number of states to learn about the effectiveness of their programs. Out of the 279 programs which the center received information on, only seven allowed for the participation of 12 to 15 year-olds.[9] In addition to these seven programs, the subcommittee reviewed programs in Illinois as well as concepts for programs proposed by educators. Elements common to all of these programs were identified by the subcommittee. The importance of these elements was reinforced when the subcommittee found many of them in an examination of four exemplary Illinois programs.

From this list of program elements or criteria, the subcommittee boiled down to fourteen the number considered the most important. Recognizing the influence of regional and local differences on the availability of outside resources and other funding sources, the subcommittee selected eight criteria thought to be crucial to the success of programs of this kind for this age group.

Taking this into account, the criteria designated as "preferred" should not, in the estimation of the subcommittee, significantly lessen their importance. It is the subcommittee's hope that programs, which are unable to demonstrate results in the "preferred" criteria, will continue to seek the resources and capacity to do so.

Criteria for An Effective Education for Employment Program

Does The Program Show Results In The Following Areas For 12 To 16 Year-Olds?

1. **Accessible to all students, that is, geographically and by population.** **NECESSARY**

   Some students in rural and poor areas in Illinois do not have access to good education for employment programs. The highest priority must be placed on the expansion of these programs and career counseling until they are available to all students.

2. **Competency in basic skills, that is, reading, math, writing, reasoning.** **NECESSARY**

   The major concern of many employers is an employee's ability to communicate, reason, and do simple math. All programs for 12 to 16 year-olds should enhance these skills.

3. **Job retention skills.** **NECESSARY**

   Young students must be taught to cope with the demands of a work environment such as punctuality, dependability, etc.

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9 Wisconsin Vocational Studies Center, Effective Programming for Youth: The Education/Work Connection, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, Wisconsin, March, 1981, pages 25, 28, 29, 53, 99, 209, 255.

4. **Accomplish stated goals and objectives as shown through program evaluation.** — **NECESSARY**

Programs should not be considered successful unless they have met their stated goals and objectives.

5. **Specific components directed toward improving sense of self-worth and motivation.** — **NECESSARY**

A successful program must attract a student's interest and enhance the student's confidence in their ability to learn.

6. **Counseling and career guidance.** — **NECESSARY**

Young students need to be made aware of the many employment options and avenues available as well as the kinds of academic preparation required by various occupations.

7. **Cost effectiveness.** — **NECESSARY**

Resources are limited and therefore programs that are too expensive to be duplicated will not be accessible to the average student.

8. **Business involvement.** — **NECESSARY**

The participation of employers in reviewing curriculums and advising and assisting teachers of these programs insures the applicability of what is taught.

9. **Employment after education, for example, hired because of training, training used in job, training assisted in getting a job.** — **PREFERRED**

The eventual obtainment of employment is the true test of the effectiveness of a program but this will not be known for several years and thus can not be a required component of a program.

10. **Parental and community involvement.** — **PREFERRED**

It is important for programs to seek the involvement of the student's family or community to help motivate him, but programs which are unsuccessful in accomplishing this should not be penalized .

11. **Career exploration — classroom and other, for example, site visits, speakers.** — **PREFERRED**

Exposure to various careers will expand the horizons of students and is helpful in motivating them.

12. **Vocational skills.** — **PREFERRED**

The acquisition of vocational skills is helpful at any age, although 12 to 16 year-old students need to master academic and coping skills first.

13. **Work experience.** **PREFERRED**

Actual experience in a work setting gives students a realistic picture of the positive and negative aspects of work although 12 to 14 year-old students may be too young to appreciate some opportunities.

14. **Address future labor market needs.** **PREFERRED**

It is important for programs to prepare students for future labor market needs so their education is not wasted on preparing for jobs that will not exist by the time they graduate.

The Department of Commerce and Community Affairs was sent a letter urging the agency to consider the list of criteria as it develops standards for local governmental units to follow in determining which employment programs should receive funding. A letter was also sent to the State Board of Education requesting that the list of criteria be considered when determinations were made regarding the allocation of the 8% Education Coordination and Grants Program funds allocated to the State Board under the Job Training Partnership Act.

Survey of Selected Junior and Senior High Schools

To learn more about the nature and frequency of business participation in education for employment programs, a survey was sent to 50 selected junior and senior high schools in 51 of the 57 educational services regions. Since more information was available on education for employment programs in the Chicago area, the survey was not mailed to schools in the counties of Cook, DuPage, Kane, Kendall, Lake, McHenry, and Will.

Thirty-one or 62% of the schools completed and returned the survey. Of the six types of business involvement in programs for 12 to 16 year-olds listed in the survey the breakdown of the responses is as follows: guest speakers, 84%; vocational counseling, 74%; work-site visits, 68%; work experience programs, 48%; curriculum committees, 45%; business advisory councils, 35%.

Three schools indicated that business participated in a manner not mentioned in the survey: Career Day, Chamber of Commerce support, and Career Counseling. Looking at schools individually and the number of different ways each allows for business involvement the range of responses is as follows: One school allowed for seven types of business participation; two schools used six types of involvement; ten schools had five; five schools used four types; another five schools used three; four schools reported two types; and four schools responded that there was no business involvement in programs for this age group.

Recommendations For Education For Employment Programs

The following recommendations, which were approved by the Commission, are the culmination of the committee's work and a distillation of the ideas of the committee members and various guest speakers.

The recommendations are designed to expand and strengthen education for employment for 12 to 16 year-old students. For more detailed information about the programs cited in the recommendations, the appendix lists the names of persons or organizations to contact.

1. **The Commission recommends that the State Board of Education encourage all school districts to incorporate, whenever possible and appropriate, into new or existing programs the features of the following model education for employment programs.**

Adopt-A-School Program

Started in June, 1981 under the leadership of Dr. Ruth Love, General Superintendent of Chicago public schools, and the assistance of Chicago United, businesses and organizations "adopt" schools. This program brings together the talents and resources of the business community and schools in an effort to improve education programs in general, and to solve problems which different schools face in particular. Through these "adoptive" relationships, students learn about business and the work world and how this relates to what they are learning in school.

Career Development Center (CDC) Program

CDC, which is a joint effort of the Chicago public schools and Chicago United, is an excellent example of a career education program. Students divide their day between attending school and working in one of fifteen career areas. Jobs are in such career areas as, hotel/motel, air transportation, management, health and medical, and law and justice. A recent evaluation of this program found that CDC helps to improve students' attitudes toward education, teachers, other students, and the world of work. CDC exposes students to careers that they otherwise would not be exposed to.

Cooperative Work Training (CWT) Program

Relying upon the use of occupational individual education plans, this Chicago public school program demonstrated its effectiveness in preparing students for the world of work and placing them in jobs after leaving school.

The Linkages Education/Employment Exploration (LEEEP) Program

The Linkages Education/Employment Exploration Program (LEEEP), which is located in Granite City (Madison County), is designed to assist students who are potential drop-outs or having difficulty performing in a normal classroom. One of the federally funded national demonstration projects, LEEEP is part of the State Board of Education's Education/CETA Linkage Project and receives funds from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Community Affairs.

Helping students to both improve their academic skills and gain a better understanding of jobs and careers is the primary purpose of LEEEP. Students in LEEEP are not confined to a classroom in a school. For them the classroom is the community, where students visit business and industry sites to observe and learn first-hand about different jobs, careers, and workplaces.

The original grant initially called for the involvement of six employers. However, the support generated by the program's concept yielded a ten-fold increase in first year employer participation. LEEEP, which gained national recognition, has improved the reading and math skills of its students. LEEEP's advisory council has helped to strengthen the program and maintain the interest and support of employers.

The Midwest Association of Business, Rehabilitation and Industry (MABRI) Program

MABRI offers a cooperative, non-profit model for the training and employment of disabled workers. Administered by the Jewish Vocational Service of Chicago, the Association now has thirty-five active employers in Illinois (Chicago and downstate), utilizes the expertise and funding of the Division of Rehabilitation Services and has an advisory board comprised of members from user companies and the supporting agencies. This model could be transferred to school districts desiring cooperative community effort in training and employment of students.

2. **The Commission recommends that the State Board of Education encourage all school districts to incorporate, whenever possible and appropriate, features of the Individualized Career Education Program (ICEP) into new or existing programs.**

   The Individualized Career Education Program (ICEP), which was developed in a Chicago suburban school district, was, "based on the premise that career education is important to children and young people; to their personal, social, emotional and intellectual growth." As the program's title indicates, this highly personalized approach to career education was shaped to students' needs and abilities. Another feature of ICEP, which was limited to 6th to 8th grade students, was the drawing together of the knowledge and talents of school personnel (teachers, counselors, and administrators), parents, and interested adults.

   Activities included in ICEP were career exploration, discussion groups, observing and interviewing people at work, internships, and a host of classroom exercises designed to enhance the experience of career education.

3. **The Commission recommends that the State Board of Education and all school districts use the criteria developed by the committee for evaluating the effectiveness of education for employment programs and as a guide for planning new programs.** (See pages 8-10)

4. **The Commission recommends that the State Board of Education encourage all school districts, including the Department of Corrections, Juvenile Division School District #428, to modify their curriculums such that students are equipped with the academic competencies and work-related skills set forth by the committee.** (See pages 3-6)

5. **The Commission recommends that the State Board of Education encourage all school districts to use systems, such as the Career Information System (CIS) and Horizons, which offer comprehensive career guidance information.**

   Horizons provides its users with information on job availability, entry qualifications, and educational and physical requirements. In addition, Horizons keeps up-to-date information on post-secondary schools and training programs, financial aid, and opportunities in the armed forces.

6. **The Commission recommends that the State Superintendent fully implement certain recommendations contained in the "Education for Employment Policy Study: Part II" issued by the State Board of Education.**

   "a. The State Board of Education should direct the State Superintendent to develop a new policy statement on education for employment which should incorporate the following premises and include consideration of vocational education, employment and training, career education, and adult education programs.

   b. The State Board of Education should direct the State Superintendent to develop and recommend to the Board a plan for regional delivery of education for employment which addresses the education and training needs of the state's youth and adult population.

   c. Although a regional system for continuous upgrading and retraining of instructional staff is necessary, the State Board of Education should direct the State Superintendent to place immediate priority on the critical upgrading and retraining needs of current education for employment personnel.

d. **The State Board of Education should direct the State Superintendent to place high priority, during the period between now and the time a regional structure for education for employment is in place, on assuring that students enrolled in employment-related programs have access to state-of-the-art equipment either in the classroom or in a community-based work site.**

e. **The State Board of Education should direct the State Superintendent to implement, no later than January 1, 1984, a special industry-based incentive grant program designed to encourage meaningful linkages between business, industry, labor and the schools and specifically directed to address the loan of work sites and workers, for the training of teachers and students in modern environments."**

7. **The Commission recommends that, in light of the fact the Work Experience and Career Education Program (WECEP) is only funded by the federal government, the program be expanded through the addition of general revenue funds. Toward this end, the Commission recommends that the General Assembly appropriate $1.5 million in FY 85 so that the program can be offered in all 145 eligible school districts.**

Available to students in only 42 of 145 eligible school districts, the Work Experience and Cooperative Education Program (WECEP) serves 14 to 16 year-olds who are academically or economically disadvantaged. Since for many WECEP is a student's first exposure to the work world, great care is taken to ensure that the experience is positive. WECEP provides special tutoring to students and stresses parental involvement in all aspects of the program. As important as it is for students to learn from their on-the-job experiences, often times the money they earn through WECEP means the difference between staying in school and dropping out.

Students who participate in WECEP are given an opportunity to learn how their academic skills are applied to job tasks. They are presented invaluable exposure to a variety of careers and occupational settings. And, through counseling and supervision, students in WECEP are helped to develop positive work attitudes and habits.

The cumulative effect of these benefits is that WECEP students, it has been found, stay in school longer than students who have the same disadvantages and who did not participate in WECEP.

8. **The Commission recommends that the United States Congress and the Illinois General Assembly increase the number of tax incentives, including wage subsidies and tax credits, as an inducement for greater employer involvement in education for employment programs.**

9. **Where they do not exist, the Commission recommends that local associations—made up of employers, educators, parents, labor representatives, and local government and social service agencies—establish for students between the ages of 12 and 16 appropriate pre-employment work training programs, provide local employment information, arrange for work-site visits, and develop opportunities for part-time employment.** For example, the Commission encourages the Chicago Community Trust to convene a meeting of employers, parents, teachers, school board members, and social service agencies in the Chicago area to explore the possibility of forming an association which would have as its aim the improvement of job readiness skills for this age group.

10. **The Commission recommends that the Illinois Congress of Parents and Teachers urge PTAs throughout the state to become more involved in education for employment programs.**

11. The Commission recommends that state associations, such as the Pre-Employment Placement Association (PREP), broaden their focus to inciude 12 to 16 year-olds and promote cooperation between employers and schools in any efforts to improve the job readiness skills of this age group.

12. The Commission recommends that all local private industry councils/service delivery areas place special emphasis on the pre-employment work training programs for 14 and 15 year-olds when allocating the funding for youth mandated by the Job Training Partnership Act.

13. The Commission recommends that Governor James Thompson and the Illinois Job Training Coordinating Council set aside funds under Title II-A of the Job Training Partnership Act for service delivery areas and statewide efforts which create pre-employment opportunities for 14 and 15 year-olds.

APPENDIX

The organizations and programs below, which were mentioned in the report's recommendations, have been listed for anyone wishing to obtain additional information.

Cooperative Work Training Program (CWT) - Chicago Board of Education, 1618 West Pershing Road, Chicago, Illinois 60649

Linkages Education/Employment Exploration Program (LEEEP) - 1254 Niedringhaus, Granite City, Illinois 62040

The Midwest Association of Business, Rehabilitation and Industry Program (MABRI) -Jewish Vocational Service, I South Franklin, Chicago, Illinois 60606

Individualized Career Education Program (ICEP) - National College of Education, Evanston, Illinois

Horizons - Illinois Occupational Information Coordinating Committee, Suite 203, 217 E. Monroe, Springfield, Illinois 62706

Career Information System (CIS) - Illinois Occupational Information Coordinating Committee, Suite 203, 217 E. Monroe, Springfield, Illinois 62706

Work Experience and Cooperative Education Program (WECEP) - Mr. John Sweeney, Vocational Administrator, Work-Study and Cooperative Education, Division of Adult, Vocational and Technical Education, Illinois State Board of Education, 100 North First Street, Room E-428, Springfield, Illinois 62777

Pre-Employment Placement Association (PREP) - Mr. Jerry Gudauskas, Lake County Area Vocational Center, 19525 West Washington Street, Grayslake, Illinois 60030

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